

**Amendments to the specification:**

On page 1, line 3, please amend the heading as follows:

~~Prior Art~~ Background of the Invention

On page 1, please amend the first paragraph as follows:

The invention relates to a method for producing piezoelectric actuators with a multilayer structure of piezoelectric layers, for instance for a piezoelectric actuator for actuating a mechanical component such as a valve or the like, as generically defined by the characteristics of the preamble to the main claim, and to an apparatus for performing the method.

On page 1, please amend the first paragraph as follows:

It is well known to produce piezoelectric actuators with piezoelectric elements to utilize the so-called piezoelectric effect, these piezoelectric actuators being constructed of a material with a suitable crystalline structure. The construction of this piezoelectric actuator is done here in a plurality of layers (multilayer piezoelectric actuators), and the electrodes by way of which the electrical voltage is applied are each disposed between the layers. These piezoelectric multilayer actuators are produced conventionally by sheet casting, printing of the electrodes, and lamination. The printing, intermediate drying and lamination are so-called batch processes in this case. The piezoelectric actuators have several hundred laminate layers, and the contacting is done by

means of two electrodes mounted on the sides. The inner electrodes must end in alternation in the interior of the actuator ak, because otherwise there would be a short circuit to the respective opposite pole. On these ends, mechanical stresses occur in operation, which can cause harmful cracks to develop, and the growth of these cracks during operation in the final analysis limits the service life of the piezoelectric actuator.

On page 2, line 11, please amend the heading as follows:

~~Advantages~~ Summary of the Invention

On page 4, line 11, please amend the heading as follows:

Brief Description of the Drawings ~~Drawing~~

On page 4, line 24, please amend the heading as follows:

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments ~~Exemplary~~  
~~Embodiment~~

On page 9, please delete "(Fig. 1)" in line 23.